

Too old for this. by hoppingmad

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Relationships: Jopper - Relationship, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-08-20

Updated: 2018-08-20

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:28:09

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,150

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Just a silly little one-shot!

Joyce has a revelation... This is pretty fluffy but there is swearing.

Edited as of 16.8.21

Too old for this.

It hits her randomly one night. The boys are in bed and she's on the sofa in the lounge, she has just polished off an entire block of chocolate (comfort food) and on her third glass of wine, (comfort... drink?) her stomach hurts from the overdoing it with the chocolate... and she realises that her thoughts have returned to a certain chief of police, yet again. She had been thinking of him while she stuffed piece after piece of damned chocolate in her mouth too...

She can't do anything these days without her thoughts returning to Hopper. She can't even start her damn car without thoughts of him (it takes a few goes first thing in the morning) she thinks 'Hopper could fix this' because he did... when they were kids. He was the one she turned to whenever there was a problem she couldn't solve.

Then for example tonight... pre-chocolate and wine that is... she had picked up a book and the main character happened to be a police officer and she ended up reading the first paragraph about sixty times and not absorbing a single word – because of *him*... it was probably a good thing as she's pretty sure the novel is mills & boons and chances are her thoughts of him would have become X-rated.

Shit.

She knew this feeling.

Hell, there were only two people she had ever been in love with – and he was one of them, albeit twenty something years ago the first time around. This all-consuming, girl-with-a-crush behaviour just had to stop. She had to somehow block him from her mind. There was no way that Jim Hopper would fit into her life – even if he wanted to, which she was sure he wouldn't. He wasn't a shy man, if he were still interested in Crazy Joyce Byers then he would have made a move by now... wouldn't he?

She groans aloud as her thoughts circle around and around, making her dizzy as if she were physically spinning. He did come over a lot... a lot, *a lot*. He was always here fixing something, checking in, picking up or dropping off El...

She was half way through her bottle of wine when she decided she had to come up with a solution before she lost her mind completely.

There were a few things she could do, probably the most sensible one would be to just be up-front with the man. They had a history after all, inviting him over for dinner and asking if maybe he thought they could be something *more* wouldn't be that hard, would it? She felt cold chill of fear at the thought, and quickly tossed that idea aside.

She could maybe... ask him out on an actual *date*? Women do that now, right? It doesn't always have to be the men? God, no this was just as bad as her last idea.

She could ignore her feelings. That was something she was a damn *pro* at. Actually, come to think of it... so was he.

Maybe she could just test the waters... maybe flirt a little and check his response. If he looked disgusted or appalled, she could play it off as nothing – not flirting, never flirting! Yeah, this plan sounded best. She could just feign ignorance.

..

It was another week after her great revelation before she was alone with Hopper. The kids were all at the Wheelers and Hopper had popped over to check that the pipe he replaced beneath the kitchen sink was holding tight.

She had managed to work herself into a right tizzy by the time he arrived. She had apparently forgotten how to flirt. She was standing awkwardly beside him while half his body was buried in the cabinet under the kitchen sink. She couldn't even keep up a normal conversation with him as she wracked her brain for ways to attract his attention.

"It looks like it's holding," she heard him mumble. Could she say something cute to that? Was there anything even slightly flirtatious she could respond with?

"Does it?" her voice comes out a squeak and she mentally slaps herself.

Breathe Joyce, just breathe. You have done this thousands of times before, it's no biggie. But she was lying to herself. Flirting was only easy when you were young, beautiful and didn't come with baggage. As Hopper pulls himself out of the cupboard and upright, he lets out his usual loud groan.

"Does your back hurt?" She asks, this time pleased to hear her voice back to normal.

"I'm getting old, Joyce." He chuckles. This was it. This was THE best spot to sneak in some remark... but no. Instead she just opens and shuts her mouth like a goldfish. Massage. Ask him if he wants a *massage* Jesus woman, it's not that hard! "Are you okay?" He asks, his brow furrows in concern.

"Um... do you... um... want a massage?" She discovers her words are almost unintelligible, and she rolls her eyes at her stupidity and tries to backtrack. "Ignore me, beer – do you – do you want a beer?"

The silence is deafening. It feels like forever before she manages to look him in the eye.

"Did you just offer me a massage?" He looks dumbfounded.

She doesn't even know how to answer, so mumbles something that sounds like *maybe* and then takes a step backwards. She wishes the floor would just open up beneath her. Hell, come at me demogorgon! It's got to be better than this.

"I don't even... what is happening right now?" He sounds hesitant and looks completely baffled by her behaviour.

"Oh for fucks sake." Joyce sinks into the closest chair. "I'm too old for this shit, I don't even know how to flirt anymore."

"Whoa, whoa, whoa..." Hopper smirks. "You were going to *flirt* with me?"

"I didn't know how else to..." she waves her hands in the air, hoping it explained things... 'cause she sure as hell couldn't find her words tonight.

“So...” Hopper shifts closer, his movement almost predatory and she leaps to feet, eyes widening. “You *do* find me attractive.”

“I didn’t say that.”

“Then what’s all...” he waves his arms around, mimicking her earlier behaviour. – “this”

“Okay, so I might... yeah. But I know I’m crazy, and I’m certainly not some Chrissy Carpenter and I-“ before she can finish he closes the distance between them, and his large hands are cupping her cheeks, his face so close she can feel his warm breath tickling her lips. She feels a jolt in her stomach. Shit, she hadn’t actually planned *this* far ahead.

“Joyce bloody Horowitz, do you even *know* how long I’ve waited for this.”

She didn’t even get a chance to respond before his lips were on hers and any thoughts in her mind flew sideways. She would have to let her body finish this conversation for her.

The End